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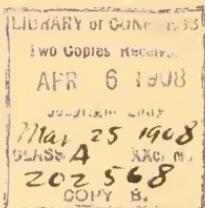
Thoughts at Eventide

—•by•—

Fannie J. Greenawalt.



HAMAKER PRINTING COMPANY
FLINT, MICHIGAN
1908



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FANNIE J. GREENAWALT.

To My Mother

Who has passed over into
the beautiful beyond this
book is lovingly dedicated.

A Storm of Nantasket.

As I my night watch kept;
Long, long ago, while others slept—
Quickly a rain storm swept
In torrents down !

How the red lightning flashed—
How the loud thunder crashed—
And the wild raindrops dashed—
Over the town !

But with the break of day;
Drifted the clouds away,
And the sun's bright ray
Lay all around !

The rollers, however, were coming in vigorously, one after another they arrived fresh from the heart of the Atlantic and fell in successive peals of thunder on the shore, retiring when spent and exhausted with a long drawn moan like travel worn giants. As they reared their crests before they spilled them on the beach, they looked like walls of green crystal, and when they poured their fury on the sand the foaming wavelets ran hither and thither desperately, until the feet of the spectators were suddenly caressed by their drifting lacework.

The rollers came on in serried files, like an army moving to the assault. As far seaward as the eye could reach, one could perceive the watery host, mustering its impatient rank and ranging them for the tremendous attack of Nantasket's perpetual siege.

Far out amid the rallying breakers stood the end of the iron pier, like a fortress begirt with tireless enemies. High above the tossing and the tumbling of the sea, hundreds of eager and enthusiastic spectators looked down upon the unceasing strife. There were other human figures dotting the changeful waste of shoal water—figures that were as posts amid the splash of the waves and the green and crystalline confusion of the sea.

Perhaps five hundred bathers in all braved the onset of the rollers, and as they staggered and plunged and often enough fell under the boisterous assault, shrill shrieks of laughter rang out above the din and rythmical clamor of the billows. I looked upon the scene and thought, how bright and beautiful, but will it last ? No, the storms of life will come ! Are we prepared to meet them ?

Forgotten.

On the soft velvet cushions of a "North Pacific" car;
Lay a dainty smiling cherub—I wonder who you are?—
Garbed in finest laces with eyes of heavenly blue,
An ermine cloak about her and but one little shoe.

Forgotten.

A woman reclines on the beach today
Where the waves of the great Atlantic play,
Her husband is, she knows not where,
And furthermore she does not care.

Forgotten.

The bells are tolling soft and slow;
The mourners weeping as they go—
To lay this broken heart away
At rest, forever and ever and aye:
Forgotten.

A burst of glory from the sky—
With paeans rolling far and high,
"Come to me, my own dear child!"
The Father looked down and sweetly smiled—
Remembered.

Hush.

Hush ! the white snow is drifting over
one who is sleeping;
Our beloved child has received a blest greeting.

Chorus.

“Stars of the morning sing together and
rejoice;”
She is freed from Earth’s fetters, in
Heaven hear her voice.

Hush ! see the fragrant spring blossoms
drift over her rest;
She has gone home, God knoweth it best.

Chorus.

Hush ! sweet summer sunlight, bird warblings
drift over her now—
To the call of her Maker we bow.

Chorus.

Hush ! the autumn leaves are drifting
over her so fair;
Listen—to the music of angel voices rare.

Chorus.

Stars of the morning, sing together
and rejoice—
She is freed from Earth’s fetters, in Heaven
hear her voice.

Christmas Thoughts.

Another twelve months passed and gone—
Like the echo of a song;
Borne to us adown the years,
Freighted with both smiles and tears
On the way.

A holy calm pervades the air;
With Christmas beauty here and there,
Wreathes of holly in the hall:
Trees and flowers at market stall,
But these decay.

Have we truly loved our neighbor ?
Have we really tried to labor
As God hath taught us to ?
For prayer and watchfulness will do
Wonderful things today.

Our Father's love is over all;
Even though the hours may pall.
For every day precedes the night,
And hearts are never always light,
Bright and gay.

We shall be a glorious band,
When we reach the heavenly land
Where all is peace and love.
That we gain this home above—
Let us pray.

To an Exotic.

Magnificent exotic ! Why the clime
Of glowing sunshine and perennial bloom,
Of fervid airs and changeless summer time,
Hast thou resigned ? Why hither hast thou come,
To these gray skies, cold blasts and sullen gloom ?
This wintry land befits not such a guest;
Amid these dreary scenes is not thy home,
When all is leafless, thou alone art dressed,
Child of the torrid sun ! in summer's gorgeous vest.

Luxuriant wanderer ! with tremulous thrills,
Thy velvet leaves are quivering in the blast;
Thy fragrance full-breathed and exuberant fills
The insensate wind that rushes rudely past,
Like christian charity on scoffers cast;
The sun gleams coldly through the falling sleet,
With frozen rain the trees are fettered fast,
And thou wilt wither in this cold retreat,
Or yield a sickly bloom amid factition's heat.

Far o'er the waters was thy native land,
Where Cuba's isle sleeps on the southern sea;
Where morn and even with delighted hand
Hang heaven's arch with gorgeous tapestry;
Spices and fruits companioned there with thee,
And birds of glittering plumage revelled near,
Caressing zephyrs held a dalliance free,
And wooed thy sweets when with coquettish air,
Thy tufted head was tossed above the gay parterre.

Upon some hillock's sloping was thy birth,
Which like an oriental maiden sleeping
Among rich draperies, lay on the earth
Embowered in groves, the zephyrs gently sweeping
Like many voices low-toned council keeping,
The sun waved ocean to the swelling shore
In eloquent voluptuousness creeping
A pleasing torpor to the senses bore,
Which one would fain enjoy, and never wake from more.

To an Exotic.—Continued.

Upon the summit of the slope I see
A vine-clad mansion, with verandahs crowned
And morn and night to watch and cherish thee
Issues a maiden with elastic bound;
Her lustrous eyes absorb the beauties round
As flowers the air; or in the sultry day
A group reclining on the grassy mound
Take their siesta 'neath the shaded ray,
Or with romance and song, the hours they while away.

When evening's starry scroll upon the sky
Like some old blazoned manuscript unrolled,
Then to the lucid moon and night wind's sigh
Thou gav'st thy sweetest fragrance, from the bold
And garish day withholden. So 'tis told
Caldean Sages did from Babel's height
Their solemn mysteries to the stars unfold.
With them their musings took sublimest flight
For meditation deep e'er loves the sable night.

Here will I sit, Exotic! and inhale
The viewless incense of thy fragrant flower,
Upon thy foliage reading many a tale
Of love and hate and frantic passion's power,
Inspired, matured, accomplished in an hour;
Or with bright memories thy lone beauty blending
With Psyche, wandering where tempests lower,
With heaven-born Genius to the earth descending—
And dream glad summer back, while thus before thee bending.

Yuletide.

Christmas bells are in the air,
Christmas cheer is everywhere—
But your fate and mine I know,
Like the flowers and the snow,
 We pass away.

In the music of the bells
Sweetly, grandly as it swells,
Comes to us “across the snow,”
Takes us back to long ago,
 A lost day.

When beyond the stars we meet,
And each other softly greet,
All our heartaches and our losses,
All our burdens and our crosses
 Will pass away.

A Piece of Bread.

A man, this morning, stood at my back door,
And asked for a piece of bread to eat;
His poor feet almost bare upon the floor,
While his nose and chin were about to meet.
Two of our great men give only for name,
But Christ, who is greater, said remember the poor,
And again in His word, forget not the same,
Lo, I will be with you forevermore.

How much did our ladies spend for inaugural gowns ?
Thousands of dollars. That would buy much bread;
All over the world, in many large towns—
I hear the pitiful cries: “May we not be fed ?”
Chicago’s little ones, with bare feet in the snow,
The aged fathers and mothers, homeless and bent;
What a vast army, and on, on they go,
With almost nothing to eat and never a cent.

Dear Lord ! soften our hearts that we may give
More unto Thy poor, and then we shall live,
As Thou hast commanded, “Inasmuch as ye did”—
Must we forget those beautiful words ? May heaven forbid.

Redbird to Golden-Hair.

I see you there, my pretty dear; but
don't disturb my eggs;
Yes, you may look, if you'll be good,
for this a mother begs.
The blessed Lord made you and me,
He cares for us the same;
And we must never, never do aught,
to cause Him grief or pain.
Now hear my roundelay,
Tweet, tweet, hey day, May day.

Come, my own little Golden-hair, and
we'll to the woods away;
Wait till tomorrow: oh, no, no, for
now it is balmy May.
Down by the brook we'll wait a while,
and then afar will go,
Up, up to meet the sun and back
to the world below.
Now hear my roundelay,
Tweet, tweet, hey day, May day.

O ! You can't fly; did you ever try ?
It's easy enough for me;
I dip and skim, by the river's brim.
Then float away, you see.
Now hear my roundelay,
Tweet, tweet, good day, good day.

Cherries.

How are the fine old cherry trees ?
Where in sweet June weather,
We sat visiting under the boughs—
All of us together.

The picture is fresh today;
Our feet in the green grass resting,
And the ripe red cherries lying there
Close to the brown earth trysting.

‘Twas a delightful happy time,
In the blossom scented weather—
Skies were blue and we were true.
All of us together.

We remember the quiet home,
And the wild bird’s merry trill;
The golden wheat fields in the sun
Over on yonder hill.

We think of the old low rooms,
And many that were there;
God bless and keep them every one
Free from sin and care !

Our love to the fine old cherry trees:
Where in sweet June weather
We sat visiting under the boughs—
All of us together.

Under the Silent Stars.

Under the silent stars we met,
By the side of the moonlit sea,
She with her wind-tossed golden curls,
And her name it was Nita Rhee.

Her eyes shone like the stars above,
With passion and wild unrest,
Her lips were red as the carnation rose
That trembled against her breast.

She stood looking out o'er the waters dark,
The waves kissed her dimpled feet,
She lifted her robe from the incoming tide,
Her ankle—ah—me, how sweet.

Said I, dainty maid, think me not over-bold,
I am curious, that much I confess,
Are you angel, or mortal? by Jove!
I am drunk or dreaming, I guess.

The musical tide, the glimmering stars,
The long stretch of sand on the beach,
The glorious night blue-vaulted above,
And the girl that I dare not reach.

Just then was the time to go, I ween.
You think so? Oh well, that may be,
But then, I am glad that I did not,
For—for—we are married, you see.

Destiny.

A sweet bright smile and dimples three;
Eyes that invite—
What is to be, will be.

A walk at sunset, you and me;
A stolen kiss—
What is to be, will be.

A talk with pa, and ring you see;
“So it goes”—
What is to be, will be.

The Reverend next, a trip at sea;
My bonny bride—
What is to be, will be.

A cherub fair with dimples three;
Eyes like papa’s—(oh well)
What is to be, will be.

A Lullaby Song.

Lullaby, baby!
In the east there is light,
All night have I held thee close to my heart:
The sun now is rising, like a king in his might,
Pictured and painted by art.

Lullaby, baby!
Blows the wind from the mountain,
Dreamily rocking my dear one to sleep,
And he sings and he breathes through yon dripping fountain,
Old wind you are fickle and fleet.

Lullaby, baby!
The doves now are cooing
And billing in meadows where clover is sweet;
And the kine far away are lowing and mooing,
The milkmaid to meet.

Lullaby, baby!
The birds they are calling
Good morning! good morning! on every breeze.
And a bright golden star in the east is falling
Till lost in the depth of the trees.

Lullaby, baby!
Close your blue eyes and sleep;
The dreamboat is waiting, embark while you may:
You have nothing to lose and nothing to keep,
And nothing whatever to pay.
Sleep, baby, sleep.

Evening.

How calm the stream as it nears the tide;
How sweet the flowers at eventide,
Bird songs more mellow at close of day;
Loved ones divine when they pass away.

Morning is brilliant, but holier far
Is evening whose robe is pinned with a star,
And man aweary must love her best;
Morning means toil, but twilight rest.

She was born in heaven, is wondrous fair;
A breath of Eden on the wings of prayer—
Angels' footsteps follow her apace * * * *
To close the tired eyes of day in peace.

Hushed are all things, as she throws
O'er hearts and homes her mantle of repose;
There is silent beauty, grace and power
In evening, known not in the morning hour.

From early dawn till sunset we must toil;
Turn life's hard furrow, plow the weedy soil—
Tread with aching feet o'er moss and stone,
Amid the multitude, yet quite alone.

Dear Christ above, hear Thou our plea!
When sunset comes to us, may we—
Leave behind as we pass away * *
Beautiful twilight round our sleeping clay.

Only the Hired Girl.

"Only the hired girl!" exclaimed Vivien May, as a distinguished looking, well-bred young lady entered the room with a letter for Miss May.

This expression was called forth by a look of inquiry from Ralph Whitney, who was calling upon Miss May, and conversing with her in regard to the letter which was expected; it proved to be an invitation to a musical recital at "Sleeper Hall."

"Who is the hired girl?" asked Mr. Whitney, "she is certainly very beautiful; a kind of beauty one seldom meets, it is goodness, or, soul beauty, that shines from her eyes."

Imprudent young man! to speak thus to the pampered, handsome idol of a proud family, forgetting that she also was a woman; but Ralph Whitney, although he was the son of a millionaire, had not been spoiled by adulation; he was kind hearted and free from jealousy; therefore he knew not the quicksands so dangerously near.

"She is Miss Ruth Field" said Vivien coldly, "and will only be here temporarily."

"A relative?" inquired Mr. Whitney—

"No! the daughter of an acquaintance: she is well educated, however, which is fortunate for her, as she is poor. I believe she has engaged to teach at the Normal."

"Is she entirely without means?" asked Ralph.

"Yes! I think so; she has an invalid mother and a little sister to support; her father is dead, killed in a railroad disaster or something of the kind."

Ralph Whitney would have liked to know more about Miss Field, but Vivien's replies were so brief, and she seemed rather annoyed; so he concluded the subject was not agreeable to her and dropped it.

Not long after this conversation Vivien said to her mother, "I wish you would not keep Ruth longer; I do not like her, and one thing I shall insist upon; while with us she must not be asked to sing!"

A few days later Vivien gave a whist party, and the understanding with her mother was that Ruth should be kept in the background.

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Only the Hired Girl.

CONTINUED.

The evening designated for the party arrived; and with it about fifty guests assembled at the palatial home of the May's.

There was one in this brilliant company who was as much out of place as a lily would be in some gay parterre surrounded by poppies; her lady-like manner, perfect simplicity, the face lighted by clear, dark eyes, within whose depths one could see great possibilities. ("Vultus est index animi.")

She was merely "the hired girl."

When the card playing and feasting were over, someone suggested music, and after a few preliminaries, Vivien seated herself at the grand piano and rendered a "Nocturne," from Chopin, after which Miss Field was asked to sing by an intimate friend of the family; it was impossible to refuse such a request, and she was allowed to comply.

The song was very sweet, Gounod's delicious "Fruhlingslied," (Spring song) and as the singer went on, it seemed to Mr. Whitney, who was one of the listeners, that it was May with bird songs and blossoms, in lieu of December. When the song was ended, Ralph led her to a secluded nook in the conservatory and conversed with her on different subjects.

Ruth had never been *tete-a-tete* with such a high-bred man, who treated her with so much deference and courtesy as if she had been the daughter of an ambassador, or, possibly a queen; and who listened with interest to all she said; Ruth enjoyed talking with him exceedingly, for she had known few pleasures since the death of her father.

The next afternoon Vivien May attended the recital to which she had been invited, with a number of her friends, Ralph being one of them. While taking a survey of the audience, who should they see in front of them but Ruth Field and another young lady.

As the recital continued Mr. Whitney discovered that none of his, or rather, Miss May's party, could appreciate with such keen delight, the wonderful selections rendered, as would naturally be expected.

Only the Hired Girl.

CONTINUED.

Ruth's face was a study, she seemed a part of Beethoven's exquisite, immortal, "seventh symphony;" and her rapture could scarcely be controlled while each note of Mendelsohn's beautiful "Capriccio Brilliant," and the heavenly "Kreuzer Sonata," filled the hall with rare, subtle sweetness; one could easily imagine the angel's pausing to listen.

After the recital Vivien's jealousy and indignation knew no bounds; she even forgot common good breeding, and said to Miss Field—

"How dare you receive the attention of one whom you have known so short a time? You must not remain here! I wish you to leave this house immediately! why! it is simply dreadful!"

So, almost before Ruth could realize it she was upon the street.

Her heart was crushed, though she tried to be brave, but the tears would come.

She was walking, she knew not where; neither did she care: it did not matter; God had forsaken her. Suddenly, a quick step behind her and Ralph's familiar voice exclaimed:

"Really, Miss Field, I supposed you were home long ago. Pardon me! where are you going?" and she replied bursting into tears:

"I do not know. I cannot go to my mother and little sister; they have sorrow enough."

By tact and persistent effort, he got the whole story at last.

And when the chime of bells at old Trinity rang out the midnight hour, he clasped her to his heart and called her by the holy name of wife.

He had married "the hired girl" and in that way manifested his good, practical common sense.

Our Lives, Like the Flowers, Fade Away.

COMPOSED FOR AND READ AT A DINNER GIVEN AT THE "HOTEL
DRESDEN," FLINT, MICH., SEPTEMBER TWENTY-SIXTH,
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND SEVEN

Come ! let us go straying today. Down in the quiet, beautiful woodland and while passing, we will note the different points of interest. Here we are under this giant oak, whose arms flung wide and protectingly, form a shelter from the heat and storm, surely that is a blessing. Yonder, is a broad flat rock; let us sit down and rest and while loosening the sandals from our tired feet, we will remember, (if we can,) how many miles those feet have traveled, amid the ups and downs of life. The rock is a blessing also. Now, we come to this sparkling, rippling rivulet; dip the cup in its lucid waters and while we quench our thirst, Listen ! hear it laugh and sing on its way to the sea. The brook is a blessing too. At last, we have reached the woodland, with its murmuring, whispering pines. How deep and dark ! How cool and refreshing ! Throw yourselves upon the needles; are they not soft and fragrant ? Now, we will sleep and dream,—and—dream, that we are once more children, in our childhood homes; perhaps, at a mother's knee, being taught that story so often told, of Jesus and His wonderful love. What a sacred calm pervades the old home ! How beautiful the twilight hour and the bird songs, Hush ! a nightingale is singing, how he trills and warbles his good night aria, ere he seeks his downy couch and tucks his head under his wing, to sleep—perchance to dream. The forest is a blessing. We have many things for which to be thankful, blessings that we are apt to overlook; but, dear ladies, let us go softly and slow, for our lives like the flowers fade away and we may soon sleep that long sleep, which knows no waking; God grant us perfect rest—and peace.

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